SHRI S. S. SURJEWALA: Madam, I am talking about the military highway. ...(*Interruptions*)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am not allowing any question, I will move to the next question.

श्री महेश्वर सिंह : मैडम, मंत्री जी सेन्ट्रल रोड़ फंड की बात कह रहे हैं.... **(व्यवधान)**...मैडम, इन्होंने कहा है कि सेन्ट्रल रोड फंड ...**(व्यवधान)**..

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You cannot have the whole Question Hour on roads only. No (*Interruptions*) We can have a discussion on this. Even though it is a very serious question, the roads are bad, it cannot take half-an-hour. The Minister says that he does not have the funds we have to help him. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Madam, please allow me. (*Interruptions*)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please sit down. (*Interruption*) Please listen to me. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Madam, just a minute, please. (*Interruptions*) You are not allowing me, I am leaving the House in protest. (*Interruptions*) (*At this stage the hon. Member left the Chamber*)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay, you may leave because there are many people who have to put question. (*Interruptions*) Mr. Maheshwar Singh, please sit down. I do not allow you. (*Interruption*) There is a limit . You cannot have 30-40 questions on one question. I am not allowing. (*Interruptions*). Please sit down. We cannot allow it We cannot have the next question. Do you think there are no other questions? (*Interruptions*) Now, Question No. 302.

Road accidents in Delhi

†302. SHRI BANGARU LAXMAN:
DR. B. B. DUTTA:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Traffic and Transport Division of the Central Road Research Institute has commented that Delhi Police lacks the technical experise and has not analysed the data of deaths occurred on Delhi roads in a scientific manner;

(b) whether the road accidents in Delhi are on increase as there is no infrastructure for traffic management and frequent changes of heads of Delhi Traffic Police.

(c) whether Government have made any in-depth study in the light of the recommedations/suggestions sought for from the Central Road Research Institute, Traffic Management Task Force, Institute of Road Traffic Education (NGO) and the MCD; and

(d) if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA): (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

(a) and (b) The Government have seen the press report. However, the Institute has clarified that these remarks were made by the official concerned in his individual capacity and that the Institute does not subscribe to these views.

There has been some increase over the years in the number of road accidents in Delhi but this is for various reasons including a phenomenal growth in vehicular traffic.

(c) and (d) No such specific study has been made by the Government. However,

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Bangaru Laxman.

there is a Traffic Management Task Force (TMTF), headed by Lt. Goovernor of Delhi, which includes representatives of various Government and non-Government organisations concerned with transportation and traffic. It meets from time to time to take stock of various prblems of traffic management, and to take coordinated action in this regard.

SHRI BANGARU LAXMAN: The Delhi Police is directly under the Union Government and in Delhi accidents are increasing by leaps and bounds. The first half of the year 1997 has seen 5,000 accidents and 1083 deaths. These figures are alarming. The Minister, in his reply has said that the comments made by the Central Roads Research Institute are of an individual that is, of the Head of the Traffic and Transport Division and they are not the views of the institution. Be they the views of an individual or the institution, the fact remains that accidents are increasing and there is no scientific analysis of the reasons of these accidents. Therefore, even if they are the views of an individual, they deserve serious consideration by the Government. Therefore, I would like to know from the Minister whether the Government will take note of these and advise the Traffic Police accordingly.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: Madam, the road accidents position in Delhi cannot be claimed to be satisfactory by any means. Of course, we are all concerned with the fact that there is an increase, though I would not say it is a very radical increase, but it is a marginal increase in accidents from year to year. There are many reasons for these. Madam, two factors I may just mention which we are attending to. One of course, is the tremendous. I should say phenomenal, growth in vehicular traffic. The number of motor vehicles per kilometre in Delhi has increased from 31.16 vehicles to 109.9 per kilometre in 1996. The total number of vehicles on Delhi roads has gone up from 3.12 lakhs in 1976 to 26.82 lakhs in 1996. You will be surprised to know that the figures show that the number of vehicles plying in Delhi is more than the combined number of vehicles plying in Mumbai, Calcutta and Madras. This is one major factor which is making the control and regulation of traffic difficult. The other is that there are less number of traffic policemen in Delhi than there are in all these three major cities per lakh of population. Against an average of 19 policemen for 10,000 vehicles in other cities, Delhi has only six policemen for 10,000 vehicles. We are, of course, trying to augment the number of traffic policemen. About 1,100 new posts have recently been created in order to make up this lack. But, still it is not adequate because there is a whole question of training and all that. A number of these accidents of course, involve pedestrians who become victims. They also involve cyclists about who, we read are frequently knocked down. In most of these cases, the culprits are the heavy vehicles, that is, either trucks or lorries or buses which frequently indulge in very reckless driving ignoring speed regulations and all that. The police has been consistently after these people. I can give you the figures, if you so desire of the number of people who were challaned, the number of vehicles which were impounded and the number of licences that were cancelled of such people. But, this malady is going on. We will continue and we will welcome suggestions from Members also as to how we should be able to control this rate of accidents more effectively.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: In the last question, 17 questioners could not put their questions. I have sent their names to the Minister with a request that he may write to the all with regard to their queries. So, he may try to reply to their queries because all of them could not be accommodated. So, the 17 hon. Members can send their queries to the Minister. I have already allowed nine Members to put their queries only on one question and 17 more names were there. So, the Minister will reply.

SHRI BANGARU LAXMAN: The number of vehicels is increasing. That probably the Government cannot control. The only thing that is required is better traffic management. In order to have a better traffic management one thing the Minister has said is that they would increase the number of traffic constables. Even whatever number is there now, that is not put on the job for traffic because most of them are seen in the VIP traffic movement. This is resulting in accidents and the people committing such accidents are going scotfree. This is one thing. The second thing that I would like to know is whether the Government is contemplating to have more roads. For example, the Ring Road which was laid in Delhi was intended to have a faster and smoother traffic. Now even that road is causing a lot of traffic jams and accidents are taking place. I would like to know whether the Governmen, is contemplating to have one more road like that so that the congestion on the existing roads is reduced.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: Just at the moment, Madam I cannot definitely say that there is any plan for another Ring Road of that type. But what is very much under contemplation and which is lacking in Delhi but very much available in Bombay and to some extent in Calcutta and Madras, is the Metro Railway. The Mass Rapid Transport System carries a very big proportion of the passengers who otherwise would travel by road transport. As you know, Delhi has no such railway yet. That project is very much taken up and is on the cards. We hope within a reasonable space of time, the Mass Rapid Transport System will be introduced in railway thereby reducing quite drastically the congestion on the roads of Delhi.

DR. B. B. DUTTA: Madam, India tops the world in road accident facilities. I think the figure is 60,000. Delhi being the nation's capital which was supposed to be looked after very well by all the departments concerned, has got a major share of accidents. If you take the statistics of 23 cities in India, Delhi has got the highest share of 15 per cent. Now, the hon. Minister has given some facts and figures and as to what is being done. I have a feeling that he is trying merely to explain things away. Can we not tackle the problem? Yes, the population is growing, the vehicular traffic is growing: these are all known factors; and the city is also supposed to be planned and a number of planning bodies are involved and we know what is happening and what is going to happen ten years hence. Do you not have some imagination, some sense of planning of what we are doing about? Madam, as a sample, I will read out the reply given to this question. The reply is given in a very casual and indefinite manner. The reply says, "The Government has seen the press report. However, the Institute has clarified that these remarks were made by an official concerned in his individual capacity and the Institute does not subscribe to these views." Do you know Madam, the name of the Institute? It is Central Road Research Institute. The person who made these comments against Delhi Traffic police said that till now the Delhi Traffic Police officials have not approached them because they, from time to time, give some tips about traffic management, in spite of the deficiencies in the traffic infrastructure—how to do a zibra-crossing, how to discipline pedestrian traffic, etc. So far, they have not yet approached us. This is what he said. The man who said this is the head of the Transport and Traffic Division of the Road Research Institute and the Ministry has the guts to tell us that this is the reply of an individual and the Institute does not subscribe

to these views. Is the officer concerned telling a lie? He has written an article. Is he telling a lie? We have not expected this kind of a reply. We asked a serious question.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You ask your question.

DR. B. B. DUTTA: My question is this. Has the Ministry—because it is the nation's capital and because already 1083 people have been killed and 5,000 have been injured—made any scientific analysis of the accidents? Have you located accident—prone points in Delhi, at what time, whether in day time or in night time, maximum accidents take place, which are the type of vehicles involved in accidents and whether accidents are more in outer Delhi or inner Delhi? Have you studied all these things? Tell us these things and tell us what specific measures you have taken. Yes, there is a TTF set up by the Lieutenant Governor of Delhi.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: Madam, it is a very learned question and I do not wish to give a very learned reply which will take a long time. The point is, all these issues which the hon. Member has raised, regarding basic data i.e., roads or areas in Delhi which are more accident-prone, the type of vehicles involved in accidents, the type of victims, the time of accident, the casualty factors, are under study. We have got an Accident Research Cell in the Traffic Police. They are studying all these factors and they will no doubt come out with their findings. Also, I may say that the Lieutenant Governor of Delhi has set up a special task force dealing with the question of traffic control and accidents in Delhi. On this task force, I may just mention specially for the benefit of the questioner, among its members, is also represented the Central Road Research Institute to which a reference has been made and the head of this Institute is also a member of the task force set up by the Lieutenant Governor. If he has got any suggestion or criticism to make about the lack of technical expertise and so on, he is certainly free to make his contributions thereto. I think, something useful will come out.

DR. KARAN SINGH: Madam, I am sorry there does not seem to be any sense of any urgency in the reply given by the Ministry. They say that "there has been some increase in the number of road accidents in Delhi over the years, but this is for various reasons, including the phenomenal growth in vehicular traffic." This is not simply some growth. I have been living in Delhi for 30 years; there has been a phenomenal growth in accidents. In fact, even after 50 years of freedom the situation in Delhi is shameful and disgraceful. Delhi is one of the most polluted cities in the world. One of the reasons for this is the undiminished growth of vehicular traffic. Madam, I would like to urge the hon Minister who talked about rapid transport system, over-bridges, and overall planning for our Capital, that simply setting up research centres consisting of experts is not enough. This reminds me of a famous sher of Ghalib:

हमने माना कि तगाफुल न करोगे लेकिन
खाक हो जाएंगे हम तुमको खबर होने तक।

By the time your research institute reports, the whole of Delhi will be reduced to dust. May I urge my dear and good friend, Shri Indrajit Gupta, that he should inject a little of his well-known dynamism into this problem and see that something concrete is done in the course of this year.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: Madam, it is a suggestion for action which I welcome.

SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: Madam, one of the reasons for the increase in accidents is that there is a laxity in giving driving licences to drivers. Most of the drivers do not know traffic rules. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether a special arrangement would be made to see that driving licences are issued only to those who are proficient in driving and know traffic rules? Those who are already in possession of a driving licences may be checked whether they are proficient in driving and they know traffic rules well.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: Yes, Madam, it is a fact that there are many drivers, especially of commercial vehicles and heavy goods traffic, who, in our opinion, are not really as familiar with traffic rules, as they should be. I have no doubt in my mind that the licensing procedure and licensing process in Delhi and in other cities also is prone to a good deal of corruption. We are trying to take remedial measures in this regard. When we find that some driver is violating traffic rules and probably it is due to his own inefficiency, then such drivers are again called for and, if necessary, they are put through a fresh driving test, and if we find that they are not satisfactory, then licences are not issued to them again.

श्री ओम प्रकाश कोहली : उपसभापति महोदया, मैं स्वयं महसस करता हूं कि गृह मन्त्री जी का जो उत्तर है, मल प्रश्न का जो जवाब है उसमें दिल्ली में सड़क दुर्घटनाओं के समाधान के प्रति कोई गम्भीरता दिखाई नहीं पड़ती है। जो मूल प्रश्न हैं उसके (ग) भाग में पूछा गया है क्या सरकार ने केन्द्रीय सड़क अनुसंधान स्थान, यातायात प्रबन्ध कृत्तिक बल, सड़क यातायात शिक्षा सस्थान तथा दिल्ली नगर निगम से प्राप्त सिफारिशों/मांगे गये सुझावों को ध्यान में रखते हुए कोई गहन अध्ययन किया है। इसका उत्तर है —

"No such specific study has been made by the Government."

अगर यह समस्या इतनी गम्भीर है तो सरकार को उसका कोई गहन अध्ययन करने की आवश्यकता क्यों नहीं अनुभव हो रही है और उत्तर यह दिया गया है ।

"However, there is a traffic Management Task Force, headed by the Lt. Governor of Delhi, which includes so and so."

उपसभापति महोदया, आपके माध्यम से मेरा प्रश्न यह है कि लेफ्टिनेंट गवर्नर के नेतृत्व में जो ट्रैफिक मनेजमेंट टॉस्क फोर्स गठित की हुई है वह वर्ष 1996–97 में कितनी बार मिली ? उस टॉस्क फोर्स की बैठक कितनी बार हुई ? नम्बर 2, उस टॉस्क फोर्स में क्या सड़क दुर्घटनाओं के मूल कारणों का गहराई से अध्ययन किया गया या नहीं और तीसरे, इन सड़क दुर्घटनाओं पर काबू पाने के लिए कोई स्ट्रेटेजी वर्क-आउट की गई है या नहीं ?

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: Madam, this Task Force has been set up, under the supervision of the Lt. Governor, quite recently. It is not that this Task Force has been operating for many years. As I said, a number of experts have been taken on this Task Force as Members, including experts from the Central Road Research Institute. They are also there; plus others.

Offhand, I cannot reply to the question which the hon. Member has asked as to how many times they have met; how many meetings have been held. If he wants, I can get the information and pass it on to the hon Member. But I think a Task Force of this type which tries to make a detailed study of a complex problem like this is bound to take some time before it comes up with any reliable findings and report. As soon as

these are available—we have not received any report yet—I will certainly communicate it to the House.

श्री अमर सिंह : मैडम, मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय गृह मंत्री जी से जानना चाहूंगा जैसा कि उन्होंने कहा है कि भारी मात्रा में सड़क दुर्घटनाएं भारी वाहनों द्वारा की जाती हैं। मैडम, मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि इस तरह की दुर्घटनाओं की रिपोर्ट दर्ज करवाने में पुलिस की शिथिलता काफी प्रयास में आई है, इस बारे में माननीय गृह मंत्री जी क्या कदम उठा रहे हैं? मैं उनसे यह भी जानना चाहता हूं कि पिछले 6 माह में यातायात नियमों के उल्लंघन के फलस्वरूप कितने भारी वाहनों के चालान किए गए हैं ?

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: In the year 1996, Madam, the number of buses impounded was 6,727; the number of drivers arrested was 3,302; the number of prosecutions launched was 2,15,524. In 1997—I have figures only up to 31st July—the number of buses impounded was 2,714; drivers arrested—1,628; Prosecution launched— 94,959.

As I said earlier, an analysis of the road accidents shows that heavy goods vehicles—mostly trucks— are involved in, what one may call, hit-and-run accidents.

Several measures have been taken to curb this menace, including night patrolling, launching of a special drive under section 184 of the Motor Vehicles Act, ban on the plying of heavy vehicles during daytime, enforcement of the discipline of keeping to the prescribed lanes, and a massive checking which, as I said, during the current year, up to 31st July, 1997, resulted in 2,45,867 prosecutions.

I have just been informed, Madam, that the Task Force has met twice. Up to February, 1997, it has held two meetings.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Credit to Handloom Weavers

*303. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) Whether it is a fact that his Ministry has taken note of the non-availability of credit to handloom weavers due to non-cooperative attitude of the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development and other financial agencies;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the measures Government have taken or propose to make the credit available to handloom weavers particularly in Gujarat.

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R. L. JALAPPA): (a) and (b) The Government has taken note of the non-availability of credit to handloom weavers particularly due to linking of interest subsidy from State Governments, to the credit flow and insisting of State Government guarantee for sanction of credit to the cooperative banks by NABARD.

(c) The following measures have taken by the Government in this regard:—

(i) The matter has been taken up with NABARD and as a result the NABARD has delinked the interest subsidy from the State Governments w.e.f. 1-10-96 for sanction of the credit limits under refinance scheme. Now the State Govts. have to release the interest subsidy directly to the weavers cooperative societies.

(ii) The requirement of State Government guarantee has been